



**City of College Park  
Department of Planning, Community & Economic Development  
Staff Report**

**Reviewer:** Erik Valentine

**Date:** October 26, 2023

**A. APPLICATION INFORMATION**

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**Application Number:** CPD-2023-01

**Hearing Date:** November 2, 2023

**Applicant:** UMD Catholic Student Center (Newman Center)

**Premise Address:** 4141 Guilford Drive

**Location:** The property is located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Guilford Drive and Cornell Avenue, south of Knox Road.

**Previous Use:** Place of Worship (Catholic UMD Student Center)

**Proposed Use:** Place of Worship (Catholic UMD Student Center)

**Request:** Departure from Parking and Loading Standards for 17 parking spaces for a Place of Worship (Student Center) with 230 seats.

**Requirements:** Section 27-6305 (a) of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance requires one off-street parking space for every 4 seats for a total of 57.5 parking spaces.

Section 27-6308 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance includes several provisions to reduce the amount of required parking. This site is eligible for a reduction of 50% because it is within a quarter mile of a public transit stop. It can receive an additional 10% reduction because users are primarily students who walk to services.

**B. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

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**Land Area:** 2.78 acres or 121,096.8 square feet

**Gross Floor Area:**

18,105 square feet, with proposed expansions totaling approximately 3,830 square feet.

**Zoning:**

RMF-20

**Property  
Characteristics:**

1. According to the tax records, the primary structure was built in 1950.
2. The existing building totals 18,105 square feet. The planned renovation includes various expansions that total approximately 3,830 square feet, categorized as follows:
  - a) Barney Room expansion: 1,520 sq. ft.
  - b) Courtyard enclosure: 1,470 sq. ft.
  - c) Kitchen expansion: 616 sq. ft.
  - d) Chapel extension: 224 sq. ft.
3. The total amount of disturbance including areas outside of the building expansion areas is 4,200 square feet. The purpose of each of these expansions is to allow the Student Center's existing space to operate more efficiently to serve the existing student population on a regular basis by the Student Center. No new Staff is being hired and no new seating is being added to the Chapel.
4. The Student Center currently accommodates 17 code compliant parking spaces within its existing parking lot, which supports a Use & Occupancy permit for 170 seats inside the Chapel. The actual seating available in the existing pews equals 230 seats. This actual number, 23, is the one used in formulas calculating the number of required parking spaces for the project site, as well as in applicable reduction calculations.
5. Under Section 27-5100 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance, a Place of Worship is a permitted use in the RMF-20 zone.
6. Pursuant to Section 27-3605(a)(2)(O), the proposed expansion is exempt from filing a Detailed Site Plan because it is under the 25,000 square foot threshold for nonresidential expansions (3,830 square feet). Pursuant to Section 27-6104, expansions of nonresidential uses where the cumulative expansion area is less than 50% of the existing building square footage (9,052

square feet for this project) must only comply with Development Standards related to:

- a) Off Street Loading and Parking;
- b) Environmental Protection and Noise; and
- c) Neighborhood Compatibility Standards.

7. The requested departure for this proposal only relates to the Off Street Loading and Parking requirements of the Development Standards. Given the minor nature of the disturbance associated with the footprint additions, the project is pursuing an NRI Equivalency Letter (NRI-EL), and review is pending. The project complies with all Neighborhood Compatibility Standards.

**Neighborhood  
Characteristics:**

1. The property falls just outside the boundaries of the 2010 US 1 Central Corridor Sector Plan. However, it does lie within the Capital Beltway region as defined by the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The property is encircled by dense student housing, single-family homes, Guilford Woods, and another Place of Worship use.
3. Guilford Drive experiences heavy pedestrian traffic and is utilized by public transportation services offered by the University of Maryland.

**Applicant's Proposal:  
Parking Reductions:**

1. The Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance includes several provisions to reduce the amount of required parking per Section 27-6308, which the Applicant proposes to utilize:
  - a) (a) Transit Accessibility
    - a. (1) Up to a 50% reduction for uses located within a one-quarter mile radius of a high-service transit stop.
  - b) (d) Other Eligible Activities
    - a. Up to a 10% reduction may be authorized in exchange for any other strategy that an applicant demonstrates will effectively reduce parking demand on the site of the subject development, provided that the Applicant also demonstrates that the proposed development plan will do at least as good a job in protecting surrounding neighborhoods, maintain traffic-circulation

patterns, and promoting quality urban design as would strict compliance with the otherwise applicable off-street parking standards.

2. The Applicant is proposing to utilize these two reductions to lower the total amount of required parking spaces for this project.
  - a) Transit Accessibility: The Student Center is located within a one-quarter mile radius (1,320 feet) of the Graduate Gardens at 4315 Rowalt Drive Shuttle UM bus stop (approximately 1,200 feet). This stop is along Route 105, the Campus Parking Connector.
  - b) Other Eligible Activities: Patrons of the Student Center have been historically pedestrian in character. A large percentage of students attending services bike to the Student Center, and an additional percentage walk from their student housing accommodations.
3. Section 27-6307 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance additionally provides methods to consider off street parking alternatives, provided that a parking facility is an allowed primary use in the zone where it is located, that it is within a one-quarter mile radius of the project site, that it cannot be across an arterial road from the site, that it must have safe pedestrian access, and have a recorded parking agreement.
  - a) The Mowatt Lane Parking Garage is located directly across the street from the Student Center. It is located in the LTO-E zone (Local Transit-Oriented-Edge), where a parking facility is a permitted primary use. The parking garage is well within the one-quarter mile radius required, and is not located across an arterial road from the Student Center. It also features a designated pedestrian crosswalk across Mowatt Lane that feeds into the project site. A recorded parking agreement would not be necessary, as the garage is available for the public to use at times of high demand for the Student Center.
4. The formula for calculating the required spaces is as follows:

- a)  $230 \text{ (seats)} / 4 = 57.5 \text{ parking spaces}$
- b)  $50\% + 10\% = 60\% \text{ reduction}$
- c)  $57.5 \text{ reduced by } 60\% = 23 \text{ parking spaces.}$
- d)  $23 \text{ required spaces} - 17 \text{ provided spaces} = \text{departure of } 6 \text{ spaces}$

- 5. The Student Center currently provides 17 parking spaces. These 17 spaces are carried over through the renovations, as shown in the site plan. As a result, the Applicant is requesting a departure of 6 required spaces to validate the existing number of seats.

### **C. REQUIRED FINDINGS FOR GRANTING A DEPARTURE FROM PARKING AND LOADING STANDARDS**

**A recommendation that a departure be granted shall be made by the Commission only upon the following findings:**

- (1) The purposes of the applicable provisions of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal.**

The purposes of the applicable provisions will be equally well served by the Applicant's proposal. The property is located around dense student housing developments and is served by public transportation facilities. The Student Center has served as a Place of Worship on this site since 1963, when it was constructed pursuant to a Special Exception for a private club on the property. To date there have been no reported parking issues, and the proposed expansion will not alter the available parking or number of seats inside the Chapel.

- a. To require (in connection with each building constructed and each new use established) off-street automobile parking lots and loading areas sufficient to serve the parking and loading needs of all persons associated with the buildings and uses.**

Since it first began to be used as a Place of Worship in 1963, the Student Center has always featured 17 parking spaces. Most of the population attending services at the Student Center are students who walk or ride their bikes to the site, building a historically pedestrian character. The Applicant reports that parking has never been an issue on the site. Additionally, the Mowatt Lane Parking Garage is located across the street, and could mitigate any occasional parking needs during expected times of high demand.

- b. To aid in relieving traffic congestion on streets by reducing the use of public streets for parking and loading and reducing the number of access points.**

Street parking around the Student Center is limited to permit holders, which will prevent patrons from parking on the street unless they hold a permit for that zone. Access to the 17

parking spaces is only provided from Cornell Avenue, away from the traffic and congestion of Guilford Drive, Mowatt Lane, and Knox Road.

**c. To protect the residential character of residential areas.**

The proposed renovations and requested departure will have no impact on the residential character of residential areas. The Student Center is bordered to the south by residential properties within the College Heights Estates neighborhood, but the entire south edge of the subject property is buffered with existing vegetation. Additionally, Cornell Avenue is a dead-end street with no access to the residential neighborhood. Across Guildford Drive from the Student Center are Aspen Heights College Park and Terrapin Row Apartments, which are both dense, multi-story student housing projects. The proposed renovations and departure from the Student Center will not impact the residential character of these buildings.

**d. To provide parking and loading areas which are convenient and increase the amenities in the Regional District.**

The Student Center provides 17 parking spaces, which it has for decades. No additional attendance is expected as a result of the renovations.

**(2) The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request.**

The departure of 6 parking spaces is the minimum necessary. Physical limitations of the property and existing building prevent the Applicant from providing additional parking and loading spaces on the site. The Applicant is proposing to minimally modify the footprint of the existing building to create more workable space, which does not facilitate the creation of new parking areas. Additionally, the project site contains and is bordered by a natural forested area that they want to preserve. To access the parking spaces located in the western portion of the site, vehicles must pass through an alley along the rear of the building. Presumably, this space could serve as a temporary loading area if needed.

**(3) The departure is necessary to alleviate circumstances that are special to the subject use, given its nature at this location or alleviate circumstances which are prevalent in the district.**

The departure is necessary to validate the exiting parking spaces provided by the Student Center, which historically has been adequate to serve the needs of the site. There are an additional 6-stories of public parking available across the street if necessary.

**(4) For departures from parking and loading standards, the Commission must also find that all methods for calculating spaces required, (Division 2, Subdivision 3 and Division 3, Subdivision 3 of Part 11 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance) have either been used or found to be impractical, and that parking and loading needs of adjacent residential**

**areas will not be infringed upon if the departure is granted.**

In this case, the appropriate formulas have been used for the calculation of the number of parking spaces required by the Zoning Ordinance, as well as all applicable reductions available to the project. For 230 seats in the Chapel, 1 parking space for every 4 seats is required, equaling 57.5. The Applicant is eligible to receive a 50% reduction because the site is located within ¼ mile of a transit stop, as well as an additional 10% reduction due to the bicycle and pedestrian nature of patrons of the Student Center. Reducing 57.5 spaces by 60% equals 23 parking spaces. The Applicant is requesting a departure of 6 spaces to validate the 17 that have existed on the site for decades, and will continue to exist under the proposed modest expansions.

Parking and loading needs of adjacent residential areas will not be infringed upon if the departure is granted. Single-family homes to the south of the Student Center are not directly accessible by pedestrian or vehicle, as Cornell Avenue is a dead-end road. Parking along Cornell Avenue is by residential permit only.

**In making its findings, the Commission (APC) shall give consideration to the following:**

- (a) The parking and loading conditions within the general vicinity of the subject property, including numbers and locations of available on and off-street spaces within five hundred (500) feet of the subject property.**

A 500-foot radius of the property could be defined within the following boundaries:

- Northern Boundary: Lehigh Road / Preinkert Drive
- Southern Boundary: Hunter Lane / Eversfield Drive
- Eastern Bounday: Guilford Drive, just short of Hartwick Road
- Western Boundary: Guilford Woods

Within those boundaries, a 6-story public parking garage provides several hundred off-street public parking spaces. The exact number of parking spaces was not readily available.

- (b) The recommendations of an area master plan, or county or local revitalization plan, regarding the subject property and its general vicinity;**

No area master plan or related item is applicable to this project site. The Student Center falls just outside of the boundaries of the 2010 Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan. The Student Center is within the Capital Beltway region, and all applicable standards have been met outside of parking.

- (c) The recommendations of a municipality (within which the property lies) regarding the departure; and**

Not applicable. The City of College Park has the authority to decide this case, with guidance from a recommendation made by this body.

**(d) Public parking facilities which are proposed in the County's Capital Improvement Program within the general vicinity of the property.**

Not applicable.

**In making its findings, the Commission (APC) may give consideration to the following:**

**(a) Public transportation available in the area;**

Metrobus and The Bus (Prince George's County) have stops nearby on Route 1. Shuttle UM has several stops near the project site, with one being within the required ¼ mile radius for parking reductions. The College Park Metrorail Station is approximately 1 mile, or a 22 minute walk, from the property.

**(b) Any alternative design solutions to off-street facilities which might yield additional spaces;**

There is no explicitly devised alternative design solution to provide off-street parking facilities.

**(c) The specific nature of the use (including hours of operation if it is a business) and the nature and hours of operation of other (business) uses within 500 feet of the subject property.**

The Student Center is a Place of Worship use that hosts frequent religious services. According to their website, the Student Center hosts mass on Saturdays at 5:00 PM, Sundays at 10:10 AM and 8:00 PM, daily mass at 12:00 PM, and Wednesdays at 5:30 PM followed by a free dinner. The frequency of these services fluctuates with the academic calendar. The Student Center also hosts other events throughout the year.

Across Cornell Avenue is the Hope Lutheran Church and Student Center, which provides similar services.

**D. RECOMMENDATION**

The Applicant has demonstrated that this application meets all the necessary requirements to grant the departure, therefore, in accordance with Section 190-9 (8) (a) and (c) of the City's code, staff recommends approval of the requested departure of 6 parking spaces.

**E. EXHIBITS**



1. Application and Statement of Justification, including Zoning Map
2. Site Plan



City of College Park Advisory Planning Commission  
7401 Baltimore Avenue, Suite 201  
College Park, MD 20740  
Phone: 240-487-3538 • www.collegeparkmd.gov

APPLICATION FOR DEPARTURE FROM  
THE STRICT APPLICATION OF THE  
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE

*Instructions: Please complete and mail to the address above or e-mail to Miriam Bader at mbader@collegeparkmd.gov. All required information must be provided before an application is accepted for processing. An appointment with the City Planning Staff may be made to review the application prior to acceptance. Please call (240) 487-3542 to schedule an appointment. The following items must accompany the application: 1) an accurate plat or site plan drawn to scale that, includes all existing structures, driveway and additions; 2) filing fee or financial hardship waiver request.*

OWNER INFORMATION

Name of Property Owner (s) Roman Catholic Archbishop of Washington  
Address of Property 4141 Guilford Dr., College Park, MD 20740  
Telephone 301-864-6223 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agent/Representative (if any) William Shipp  
Address 7850 Walker Dr., Suite 310 Greenbelt, MD 20770 Telephone 301-572-3248  
Have you applied for and been denied a permit? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
Have you received a violation notice? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, date of notice \_\_\_\_\_  
Has property been the subject of a previous departure? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
If yes, provide case number(s) and dates \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you require an interpreter? ☐ Yes ☒ No

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Newman Center	N/A	N/A	A
Subdivision	Lot	Block	Parcel
RMF-20		121,203sf	
Zoning		Total Area (Sq ft)	
N/A			

Civic Association Name

## DEPARTURE REQUEST

Select the type of Departure you are requesting.

- ☒ Departure from Parking and/or Loading Spaces
- ☐ Departure from Design and/or Landscaping Standards
- ☐ Departure from Sign Design Standards
- ☐ Certification of Nonconforming Use
- ☐ Other

Based on Section 27-3614 of the Zoning Ordinance, is this Departure considered Minor or Major:

- ☐ Major
- ☐ Minor

## PURPOSE OF DEPARTURE

Describe what you propose to do and why you need a departure.

Student Center serves UMD pedestrian population. Existing parking lot adequately meets parking needs. See justification statement.

**IN ORDER FOR A DEPARTURE TO BE GRANTED, ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA MUST BE MET. PLEASE INDICATE HOW YOU COMPLY WITH EACH OF THESE.**

**Standard #1. The departure is consistent with the character of the development on surrounding land, and is compatible with surrounding land uses;**

**See Justification Statement.**

**Standard #2. The departure:**

- A. Compensates for some unusual aspect of the site or the proposed development that is not shared by landowners in general, and**
- B. Supports an objective or goal from the purpose and intent statements of the zone where it is located, or**
- C. Saves healthy existing trees.**

See Justification Statement.

**Standard # 3. The departure will not pose a danger to the public health or safety.**

See Justification Statement.

**Standard #4. Any adverse impacts are mitigated, to the maximum extent practicable.**

See Justification Statement

**Standard #5. The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that result in a reduction in each development standard by the maximum allowed over the previous twenty (20) years. (Relevant development standards cannot be reduced beyond the maximum thresholds allowed in this Subsection, through more than one departure, over the previous twenty (20) years); and**

There are no prior Departures

**Standard #6. For a departure from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual, the Planning Board shall find, in addition to the requirements above, that there is no feasible proposal for**

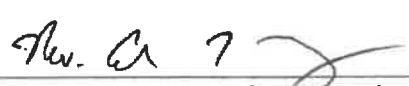
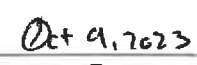
alternative compliance, as defined in the Landscape Manual, which would exhibit equally effective design characteristics.

N/A

**NAMES & MAILING ADDRESSES OF ALL ADJOINING PROPERTY OWNERS**

*(These include properties located on either side, behind and across the street from your property).*

**See Attached**

Property Address	Owner's Name	Owner's Address
Property Address	Owner's Name	Owner's Address
Property Address	Owner's Name	Owner's Address
Property Address	Owner's Name	Owner's Address
Property Address	Owner's Name	Owner's Address
Property Address	Owner's Name	Owner's Address
		
Signature of Owner (Required)		Date

Signature of Owner (Required)	Date
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**OTHER INFORMATION**

**Fee Schedule:** A check or money order shall be made payable to the City of College Park. The fee schedule is as follows:

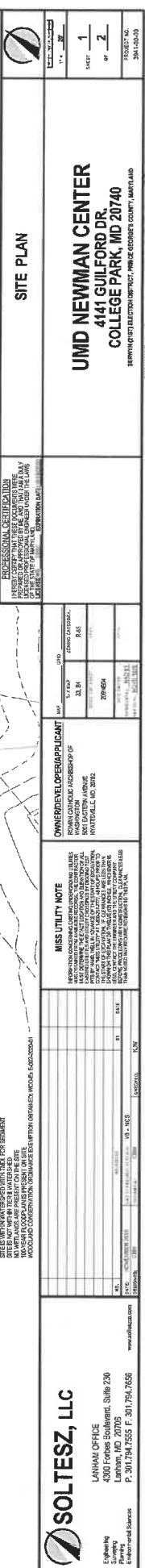
Departure for single-family detached or attached	\$100.00
All other departures	\$2,000.00

**Site Plan:** The site plan must be accurate, legible and drawn to scale. It should be prepared by a registered engineer or land surveyor and **must show all existing and proposed structures and driveways (sheds, carports, etc.)** The plan must also show all abutting streets and alleys, distances

along property lines, and distances (setbacks) of all existing and proposed structures from the property lines.

**Scheduling:** Once an application has been accepted, it may take several weeks to schedule a hearing. The applicant or an authorized representative must attend the hearing to justify the request. The Advisory Planning Commission (APC) normally meets the first Thursday of the month. After an application has been heard, the APC, will render a recommendation or hold the record open to receive additional evidence. The Commission's recommendation is forwarded to the City Council for final action. If you disagree with the recommendation, you have fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of the resolution to request oral argument before the City Council.

**Application for a departure is no assurance that it will be granted. The public hearing is for you and others interested in this case to state their positions. If you need additional assistance in filling out the application, contact the City of College Park Planning Department at (240) 487-3542. Remember, an appointment must be made with the Planning Department to review your application prior to its acceptance for processing.**



**LANHAM OFFICE**  
4300 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 230  
Lanham, MD 20705  
P. 301.794.7555 F. 301.794.7656

**UMD NEWMAN CENTER**  
4141 GUILFORD DR.  
COLLEGE PARK MD 20740

AT 167 211 1110 / 1 800 770 0000  
EASTON DISTRICT - BOWEN ROAD'S POLICE MAPS AND

3944-00-00

PARKING SCHEDULE		CALCULATION		REMARKS	
DATE	PROJECT NO.	PER A 842.4	42.5	17	17"
TIME	NO. OF LANE	-	54.5	17	17"
			17.0	17.0	17.0

10% reduction for double left lane stop = 16.3

10% reduction for other parameters, clearance width is used from table

EXPANSION AREAS	
LOCATION	AREA (SQ FEET)
THIRD	6251
CRASH	N2
COURTARD	141
KITCHEN	615
TOTAL	3603

GENERAL NOTES

[illegible]

100

MISS UTILITY NOTE

CONCERNING CUSTODY, INCLUDING THE  
IN FINAL AVAILABLE RECORDS. THE COVER

THE LOCATION AND BEARING OF THE PROPERTY ARE SHOWN ON THE ATTACHED MAP.

WILL IN QUANTITY THE START OF DE  
S UTILITY AT 1.800.23.7777, 48 HOURS  
EXTENSION. IF OUR RANGES ARE LEAD

IS PLAN OR TWELVE (12) INCHES, MATCHES  
AT THE ENGINEER AND THE UTILITY COMPANY.

ANY REQUIRING REVISIONS TO THIS PLAN.

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**IN RE:** **DEPARTURE FROM PARKING AND LOADING**

**APPLICANT:** **UMD CATHOLIC STUDENT CENTER (NEUMAN CENTER)**

**OWNER:** **ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP OF WASHINGTON**

**AGENT/CORRESPONDENT:** William M. Shipp, Esquire  
O'Malley, Miles, Nylen & Gilmore, P.A.  
7850 Walker Drive, Suite 310  
Greenbelt, MD 20770

### **STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION**

#### **PURPOSE OF DEPARTURE:**

The Catholic Student Center (the" Student Center") located adjacent to the University of Maryland provides valuable spiritual and other support for the Catholic student population at the University of Maryland. The Student Center is embarking on a renovation of its facilities which are in need of repair and updating to meet the needs of the students and Staff.

The proposed renovation includes interior upgrades as set forth in the permit submission to make the Student Center more efficient and up to date to enable Staff to serve the student population better. The existing building totals 18,105 square feet. The renovation includes various expansions that total approximately 3,830 square feet and can be described as follows:

- a) Barney Room expansion 1,520sf
- b) Courtyard enclosure 1,470sf
- c) Kitchen expansion 616sf
- d) Chapel extension 224sf

The total amount of disturbance including areas outside of the building expansion areas is 4,200 square feet. It should be noted that the purpose of each of these expansions is to allow the Student Center's existing space to operate more efficiently to serve the existing student population served on a regular basis by the Student Center. No new Staff is being hired and no new seating is being added to the Chapel.

As part of the building permit review process with Prince George's County, it was determined that a new Use & Occupancy permit will be required for the Student Center and that the Student Center does not meet the required standards for off street parking under the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance. Accordingly, this requested Departure is required to validate the existing parking in relation to the existing seating capacity for the Chapel. Parking for places of worship is determined by the number of seats provided.

The Student Center was constructed pursuant to a Special Exception for a private club first approved in 1963. It is presumed the private club designation was dictated by the fact that initially, services were held on campus and not at the Student Center. The Student Center now contains its own formal Chapel and religious services are regularly held on site for the student



population. In consultation with MNCPPC Staff, including legal counsel, it was determined that the Student Center qualifies as a Place of Worship. Under Section 27-5100, a Place of Worship is a permitted in the RMF-20 zone, which is the current zoning for the Student Center property. Accordingly, it was determined that there is no need to amend the prior Special Exception (SE-905) for the property. Further, since the expansion area is a cumulative total of 3,830 square feet, the proposed expansion is exempt from filing a Detailed Site Plan pursuant to Section 27-3605(a)(2)(O) because it is under the 25,000 square foot thresholds for nonresidential expansions. Pursuant to Section 27-6104, expansions of nonresidential uses where the cumulative expansion area is less than 50% of the existing building square footage must only comply with Development Standards related to i) Off Street Loading and Parking; ii) Environmental Protection and Noise; and iii) Neighborhood Compatibility Standards. At 3,830 square feet, the proposed expansion is less than 9,052 square feet (One half of the 18,105 square foot existing building).

Included with this Application is a copy of an analysis of the parking requirement for the Student Center applying all available reductions provided by right for a use inside the beltway. This parking analysis was reviewed and approved by MNCPPC in connection with the building permit application. As indicated in the analysis, the Student Center which accommodates seventeen (17) code compliant spaces within its existing parking lot, supports a Use & Occupancy permit for 170 seats. The actual seating available in the existing pews equals 230. Based upon that existing actual number, the required number of parking spaces after applying the 60% reduction would be 23. The formula for calculating the required spaces is  $230/4 = 57.5$  reduced by 60% = 23 spaces. Therefore, a Departure of 6 required spaces is requested to validate the existing number of seats.

**THE DEPARTURE IS CONSISTENT WITH THE CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT ON SURROUNDING LAND AND IS COMPATIBLE WITH SURROUNDING LAND USES:**

The Student Center has served the University of Maryland Catholic student population since the 1960s. It is part of the University fabric and has cooperatively operated alongside other student oriented religious organizations. Directly to the east, across Cornell Avenue, is the Hope Lutheran Center. To the north lies the University of Maryland just across Guilford Drive. Additional undeveloped University (State of Maryland) lands lies to the west. Also to the west is the Church of Latter-Day Saints property.

The Student Center is bordered to the south by residential properties within the College Heights Estates neighborhood. The entire south edge of the subject property is buffered with existing vegetation and the side street, Cornell Avenue is a dead-end street with no access to the residential neighborhood. No increase in worship capacity and no new employees are being added with the proposed renovations. Accordingly, there will be no increased impacts on surrounding areas. Additional analysis of neighborhood compatibility is provided in the attached analysis prepared for the building permit.

**THE DEPARTURE COMPENSATES FOR UNUSUAL ASPECTS OF THE SITE; SUPPORTS AN OBJECTIVE OR GOAL OF THE ZONE; OR SAVES EXISTING TREES:**

The requested Departure is the minimum necessary to validate the existing use and operations of the Student Center. The proposed renovation is long overdue and will allow the

Student Center to more efficiently serve the student population in a modern and code compliant welcoming space. A place of worship is a permitted use within the zone and the proposed Departure is in keeping with the purposes and intent of the new Zoning Ordinance which discourages overparking and provides for by right reductions (especially inside the beltway) for properties that meet certain requirements. The Departure process is still available if the by right reductions are not sufficient. In this case, the Departure is needed to recognize that the existing population of the Student Center can be adequately served without the need to increase on-site parking. Requiring the construction of additional parking would be costly for this non-profit use and just as important would require the removal of existing woodland and mature trees and would increase impervious surface on-site. Most importantly, given the pedestrian nature of the student population, there simply is no need to expand parking on site.

#### **THE DEPARTURE POSES NO DANGER TO PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY:**

The proposed Departure for all the reasons discussed above, poses no danger to public health and safety. The Departure is needed in connection with a renovation of an existing facility that has operated quietly and safely in the community. No new capacity is proposed with the renovation which includes only minor expansion of the footprint of the building. Combined with the pedestrian character of the use which served the UMD student population, no new traffic impacts or parking needs will be generated by the renovation.

#### **MITIGATION OF ADVERSE IMPACTS:**

As described above, there are no anticipated adverse impacts from the proposed renovation or Departure. No change in capacity or usage of the site is anticipated. The Student Center is predominately used by pedestrian UMD student users. The existing parking lot adequately serves the few persons needing to park at the property. Additionally, the City operates on street parking on Guilford Drive as does the Hope Lutheran Center across the street. Also, there is a multilevel parking garage on the University of Maryland property directly across Guilford Drive which is open to the public at times of high demand for the Student Center.

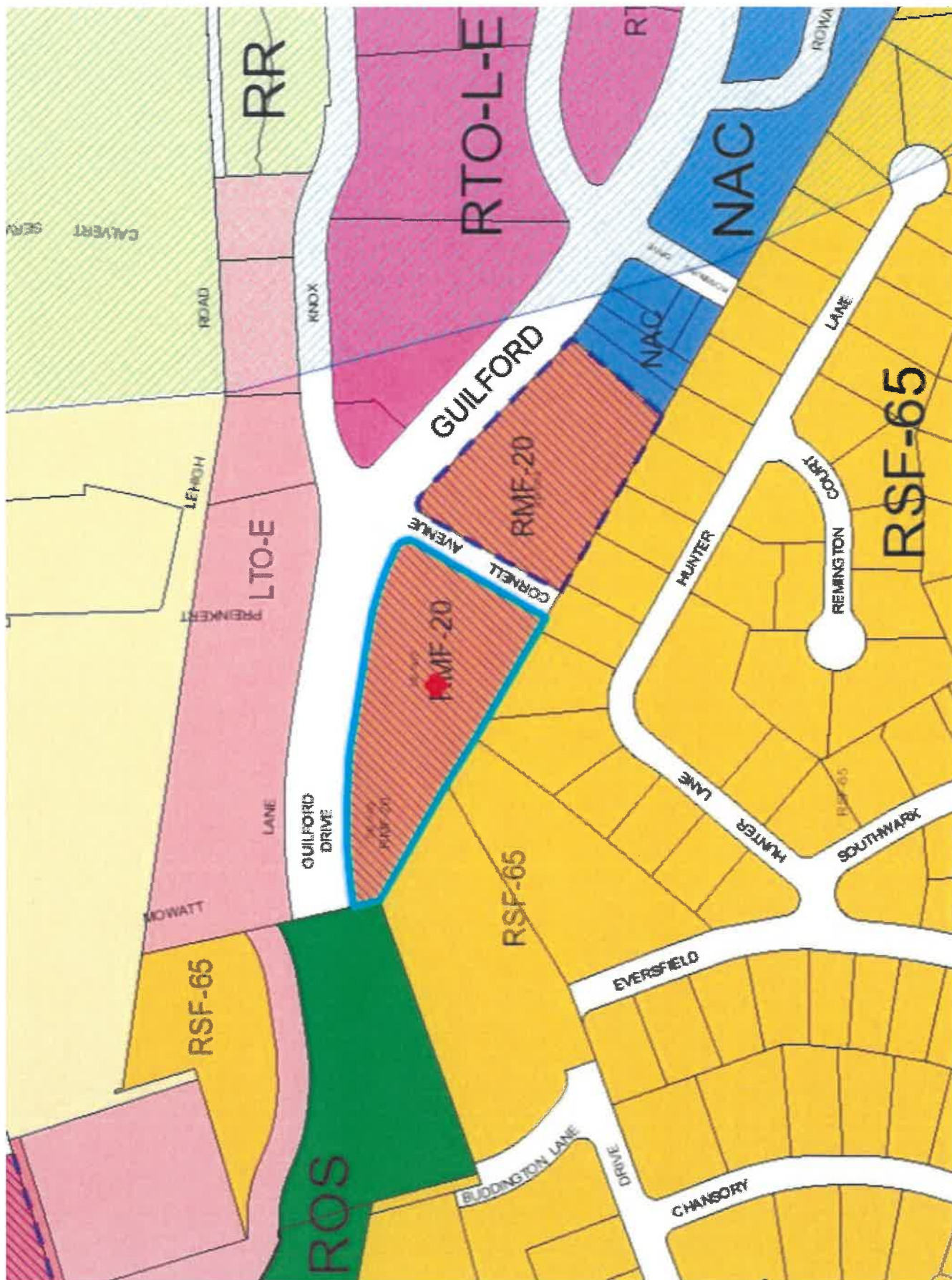
#### **CONCLUSION:**

For all the reasons stated above and in other supporting material provided, the requested Departure is reasonable and is the minimum necessary to support the existing usage of the Catholic Student Center at the University of Maryland. The existing parking facilities adequately serve the needs of users of the Student Center and the granting of the Departure will have no adverse impacts on the neighborhood or the general public health and safety. Further, granting the Departure will avoid the need to remove healthy and mature trees and vegetation. For all these reasons, we respectfully request the approval of the Departure from Required Parking and Loading Spaces in the amount of (six) 6 required spaces over the 17 provided based upon a capacity of 230 seats.

Respectfully Submitted,



William Shipp  
Attorney for the Applicant



**Catholic Student Center  
4141 Guilford Dr.  
College Park, MD 20740**

**Re: Permit No. 5758-2023-CG**

**Permit Process Analysis for Proposed Expansion:**

The Catholic Student Center (the "Student Center") located adjacent to the University of Maryland provides valuable spiritual and other support for the Catholic student population at the University of Maryland. The Student Center is embarking on a renovation of its facilities which are in need of repair and updating to meet the needs of the students and Staff. The following is an analysis of the applicability of the Prince George's Zoning Ordinance ("Zoning Ordinance") and the process required for the issuance of the permit as it relates to zoning regulation.

**The Renovation:**

The proposed renovation includes interior upgrades as set forth in the permit submission to make the Student Center more efficient and up to date to enable Staff to serve the student population better. The existing building totals 18,105 square feet. The renovation includes various expansions that total approximately 3,830 square feet and can be described as follows:

- a) Barney Room expansion 1,520sf
- b) Courtyard enclosure 1,470sf
- c) Kitchen expansion 616sf
- d) Chapel extension 224sf

The total amount of disturbance including areas outside of the building expansion areas is 4,200 square feet. It should be noted that the purpose of each of these expansions is to allow the Student Center's existing space to operate more efficiently to serve the existing student population served on a regular basis by the Student Center. No new Staff is being hired and no new seating is being added to the Chapel.

**History:**

The Student Center was constructed pursuant to a Special Exception for a private club first approved in 1963. It is presumed the private club designation was dictated by the fact that initially, services were held on campus and not at the Student Center. The Student Center now contains its own formal Chapel and religious services are regularly held on site for the student population. In consultation with MNCPPC Staff, including legal counsel, it was determined that the Student Center qualifies as a Place of Worship. Under Section 27-5100, a Place of Worship is a permitted in the RMF-20 zone, which is the current zoning for the Student Center property. Accordingly, it was determined that there is no need to amend the prior Special Exception (SE-905) for the property. Further, since the expansion area is a cumulative total of 3,830 square feet, the proposed expansion is exempt from filing a Detailed Site Plan pursuant to Section 27-3605(a)(2)(O) because it is under the 25,000 square foot thresholds for nonresidential

expansions. Pursuant to Section 27-6104, expansions of nonresidential uses where the cumulative expansion area is less than 50% of the existing building square footage must only comply with Development Standards related to i) Off Street Loading and Parking; ii) Environmental Protection and Noise; and iii) Neighborhood Compatibility Standards. At 3,830 square feet, the proposed expansion is less than 9,052 square feet (One half of the 18,105 square foot existing building). The follow discussion addresses those three standards.

### **Applicable Development Standards:**

#### **Off Street Parking and Loading.**

Section 27-6302(b) addresses proposed expansions and provides, "If an existing structure or use is expanded or enlarged (in terms of the number of dwelling units, floor area, or seating capacity), any additional off-street parking and loading spaces that may be required shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of this Section as applied only to the expanded or enlarged part of the structure or use." The proposed expansion is minimal in size and is only intended to create more efficient use of existing space. No additional seats are proposed and no new offices are proposed for additional Staff. The expansions are part of an overall interior redesign intended to allow for the more efficient service of the students and existing Staff. Accordingly, no new parking is required or proposed for the expansion.

However, although the student center has operated as a place of worship for many years, it never received a Use & Occupancy permit (U&O) for that use. Accordingly, the entire facility must now be evaluated for parking.

**Required Parking.** The seating capacity is 170 people which at the required minimum parking formula of 1 space per 4 people, the student center would need to provide 42.5 spaces. Notably there is no reduction in minimum parking requirement for places of worship that are located inside the beltway. Currently there are 17 spaces shown on the attached plan including one handicap space.

**Reduction in Parking.** The Ordinance has several provisions to reduce the amount of required parking per Section 27-6308.

Transit Accessibility

**-50% reduction if within ¼ mile of public transit stop**

-15% reduction if between ¼ and ½ mile

-Transit Demand Management Plan -does not apply to us because we do not meet the 25,000 square foot minimum size

-Bike Commuters

5% reduction max. One space for every secure bike facility provided plus on-site shower and changing facility.

**-Other Justification**



10% reduction for other justifications such as all the users are students who walk to services.

**Off Street Alternative Parking.** Section 27-6307 provides methods to reduce onsite parking below required minimum under certain circumstances.

Part of required offsite parking can be met offsite if:

- a parking facility is an allowed primary use in the zone where it's located. There is a public parking garage directly across the street from the student center that is in the LTO-E zone which allows a parking facility as a permitted primary use.

- Must be within a ¼ mile. It's well within that distance.

- can't be across an arterial road from the site. It is not.

- must have safe pedestrian access. There is a designated crosswalk directly in front of the student center to the garage.

- must have a recorded parking agreement. This would seem to not be contemplating our situation. A public garage would not have individual parking agreements. We could provide the published terms of use for public admission. We need interpretation that public garage does not need separate parking agreement.

**Applying the reductions to our case:** The student center proposes to meet its parking requirement through the application of the reduction in parking provisions of the zoning ordinance. The reductions are calculated as follows:

**50% reduction for Shuttle UM bus stop within ¼ mile.**

**10% for other justification. Students walk to mass.**

Current operations demonstrate there is no parking shortage for the student center given the historically pedestrian character of the users of the center. Accordingly, the applicant requests the full allowable reductions in the total of 60% (50+10).

**Reduction Calculation:**  $42.569 - 25.5 (60\%) = 17$ . Seventeen (17) spaces have been included on the attached building permit site plan.

### **Environmental Protection and Noise.**

27-6802. Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) – Given the minor nature of the disturbance associated with the footprint additions; the project is pursuing NRI Equivalency Letter (NRI-EL) and review is pending.

27-6803. Trees and Vegetation – Additionally, given the minor disturbance proposed, no additional plans for Woodland Conservation or trees and vegetation are required as the site and project are qualified for a Woodland Conservation Exemption (WCO-EX). The review of the request for exemption is pending.

27-6804. Floodplain Management – No floodplain areas are impacted by the project.

27-6805. Erosion and Sedimentation Control- the disturbance is less than 5000 square feet and is exempt from additional sediment and erosion approvals.

27-6806. Stormwater Management- no additional stormwater management is required.

27-6807. Chesapeake Bay Critical Area – N/A the site is not within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.

**Neighborhood Compatibility.**

27-61203

**(a) Building Height and Setbacks**

(1) the building setbacks were established when the Student Center was originally constructed. The proposed additions do not alter the establish setbacks. The Student Center is located along Guilford Road where no uniform block face has been established.

(2) the Student Center is located between 150-200 feet from existing single family development. The original Student Center and the proposed additions do not exceed 4 stories or 45 feet in height.

(3) buildings over 3 stories. Not applicable.

**(b) Building Orientation.** The Student Center is oriented toward Guildford Drive as required.

**(c) Building Design.** The proposed additions are designed to be compatible with the existing Student Center. The Student Center is residential in diesgn and includes brick material to ensure compatibility with adjacent single-family houses.

**(d) Building Materials.**

(1) Transparency. At the new lower-level rear entry, the wall area calculation is 156sf of which, fenestration is 102.25sf (65.5%). Minimum required is 35%. The new gable end at the courtyard enclosure and the cupola wall areas total 126sf. The total fenestration equals 26sf (20.63%). Minimum required is 20%.

(2) Exterior Materials. The majority of new exterior wall finishes are brick to match existing. The cupola will have 20sf of vinyl siding, less than 1% of the rear exterior finishes.

**(e) Multibuilding Placement.** Not Applicable. The Student Center is one building.

**(f) Off-street Parking.** No new parking is required for the minor additions which do not increase space for additional staff or seats within the sanctuary.

(g) Other Site Features.

(1) Loading and Trash Collection. No new loading spaces or areas for recycling or refuse collection are proposed.

(2) Drive Through. No drive through services are proposed.

(3) Exterior Lighting. The only new lighting is placed on the side walls below the 8' overhang at the rear entry doors. The fixtures are LED carriage lamps illuminating only the walkway. From the material in the manual, the project complies.

(4) Signage. No new signage is proposed.

(5) Open Space Set-Asides. The existing Student Center has extensive open space buffers to the single-family development to the rear of the property. No new open space is proposed.

(6) Natural Features. No environmental features such as wetlands or streams are impacted by the proposed additions. Natural features and vegetation in areas transitioning to single family uses are not impacted by the additions.

(h) Operational Standards. Although the proposed renovation is not a new development, the Student Center will comply with the provided noise related standards.

**Conclusion:** The proposed renovation of the student center involves mostly interior renovations with less than 5,000 square feet of additional footprint be added to the building. The student center now qualifies as a place of worship, a permitted use. Due to the minor nature of the improvements, the property is exempt from detailed site plan review, however, the proposal must comply with the general standards that apply to the subject use. The above analysis demonstrates compliance with the standards. The subject permit shall be filed as a CGU permit identifying the use as a Place of Worship which will result in the issuance of a U&O permit after full completion and inspection of the renovation.